



#### Office Locations:

Auburn, Augusta, Bangor,  
Caribou, Houlton, Portland

**MAINE MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP (MAINE MEP)** The Maine MEP, through its experienced staff of engineering, technology and business management professionals, assists small and medium-sized manufacturing firms implement changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness. Contact: Rod Rodrigue, 87 Winthrop Street, Augusta, ME 04330, (207) 623-0680, Fax: (207) 623-0779, Email: [director@mainemep.org](mailto:director@mainemep.org), Website: <http://www.mainemep.org/>

## THE MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP IN MAINE

Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a nationwide system of services and support for smaller manufacturers to become more globally competitive. At the heart of the system is a network of affiliated, locally-based manufacturing extension centers. Each center, like Maine MEP, is a partnership, typically involving federal, state, and local governments; industry; educational institutions; and other sources of expertise, information and funding support.

### COMPANY CLIPS

#### Fluid Imaging Launches Into The Marketplace

Fluid Imaging is the first spin-off company based on a technology from the world-renowned Bigelow Laboratories of Ocean Sciences in Boothbay. The platform technology is called the FlowCam, which utilizes the combination of a digital microscope, proprietary lighting, and software to not only sense the presence of predetermined sized bodies (such as algae blooms) in liquid but also to record digital micrographs of these bodies for later identification and tabulation of statistical data. Though a brilliant technologist, the founder and sole proprietor of Fluid Imaging needed help with all aspects of product commercialization. He contacted the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Maine MEP) for assistance.

Maine MEP introduced Fluid Imaging to all aspects of product commercialization. First, Maine MEP helped the company obtain over \$115,000 of cost share funding from the Maine Technology Institute, the Experimental Program for Commercialization of Technology (EPSCoT), and the Maine Space Grant Consortium so that it could afford the cost of its assistance. Maine MEP helped the company obtain patent protection, conduct market analysis, develop promotional literature and a web site, organize and staff trade shows, and train sales staff. The organization continues to provide ongoing strategic and operational management consulting. Maine MEP also helped its client partner with a company that treats bilge water in ships to prevent environmentally damaging things (such as Zebra Mussels) from being discharged in ballast water. Now two years old, Fluid Imaging is experiencing rapid growth, expanding its staff, and has enjoyed sales of \$600,000 in the first two years.

*Continued*

### STATE STATS

DATA\* COVERS JANUARY - DECEMBER 2001

Number of projects completed with firms  
**514**

Number of firms served  
**294**

Number of firms served  
for the first time  
**152**

Federal cost share for current  
operating year  
**\$863,500**

State/other cost share for  
current operating year  
**\$1,727,000**

*\*Data as reported from center*

DATA\*\* COVERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2001

Increased sales & retained sales  
**\$10,157,100**

Client capital investment  
**\$9,750,250**

Total cost savings  
**\$2,372,572**

Job (created & retained)  
**247**

*\*\*Source: Independent client impact survey*



### **ETL Safety Certification Increases Profits At Stainless Foodservice Equipment Manufacturing**

Stainless Foodservice Equipment Manufacturing, Inc. (SFE), established in 1991, specializes in custom stainless steel supermarket fixtures, including ergonomic and standard backroom food preparation equipment and customer convenience equipment such as produce scale hangars, fish and produce displays, worktables, and utility carts. The company supplies well-known supermarket chains. Located in Caribou, SFE employs less than 20 people.

The company successfully developed a new product that incorporated refrigeration technology into its product line for the first time. To successfully commercialize the new product, SFE first had to obtain the appropriate safety inspection and certification (ANSI/UL-471 Safety Evaluation & Certification). The company contacted the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Maine MEP) for assistance.

Maine MEP worked with its partner, Intertek Testing Services (ITS), to complete and comply with the required certifications. This project supported recent product development and was a major component needed for SFE to compete more successfully in the global marketplace. Furthermore, the company recognized opportunities that would positively impact and profit suppliers, distributors, and other professionals in diverse sectors throughout the state of Maine. As a result of the assistance provided by Maine MEP, in March 2002 SFE was granted "Authorization to Mark" per ETL requirements under the ANSI/UL-471 Standard. This certification resulted in initial product orders valued at \$96,000 with year-end sales projections estimated at \$150,000.